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county court bench, they are lawyers who are able to understand the kinds of issues that would be presented in these cases and make good decisions. So why don't you go ahead and do it? Well, I can sympathize with those arguments, but I think that it raises a couple of other issues that are far more practical in their nature. For example, if I had a 35 or a 40 thousand dollar case, could I not suggest to my opponent that I'm going to bring the case in the county court; by bringing the case in the county court I will assure you that if I lose in the county court there will be an appeal to the district court, where we will go through the entire case again on the record, because that review would be de novo on the record. And then if I lose in the district court, I'm going to bring an appeal to the court of appeals. So, if you want to hang in there with me through a trial and at least two appeals, we'll litigate this. If, on the other hand, you want to settle, here's my proposal. At that point we have given somebody an advantage in a lawsuit because we have provided them with, as I understand things, another appeal and another portion, another thing that is expensive to both sides of the litigation. I'm also concerned a little bit that the proposal opens us up to the potential for what I would characterize as judge shopping. Now in some of our districts that might be a little bit harder to do than others, because you have a significant number of district judges and a significant number of county judges that serve an individual courthouse. But that isn't true everywhere in the state. So what if you have a county judge that likes a particular kind of case and you have a county judge or a district judge that you're not so certain about? It gives an opportunity, I think, for mischief. And I'm not at all sure that the potential for mischief, as I see it, outweighs any potential benefit in terms of efficiencies in the courts or evening out of the workloads in the courts. If others can convince me that my...my notions about mischief are misdirected or they are mischief with a small m, instead of a capital M, I would like to hear that discussion.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Thank you, Senator Wickersham. Further debate? Senator Kristensen.

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: Thank you, Mr. President. Members of the Legislature, I echo some of the same concerns Senator Wickersham